Approved for Release: 2019/07/29 C06629216

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Document:CIAA -0000 462852 Subject: STATEMENT BY SALVADORAN AIR FORCE CHIEF THAT THE DEFENSE MINISTER MUST RESIGN SOONC 12927CIAA 462852 MSO83-0447398

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TO: IMMEDIATE DIRNSA, DEPT OF STATE, DIA, TREASURY DEPT,
WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM, NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
STAFF, ZEN/CIA OFFICE OF CURRENT OPERATIONS,
USCINCSO QHTS PANAMA.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WARNING: INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE.

REPORT CLASS ~~S E C R E T~~ WNINTEL [redacted] (b)(1) (b)(3)

COUNTRY: EL SALVADOR

SUBJ: STATEMENT BY SALVADORAN AIR FORCE CHIEF THAT THE DEFENSE MINISTER MUST RESIGN SOON

[redacted] (b)(1) (b)(3)

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TEXT: 1. [redacted] CHIEF OF THE SALVADORAN AIR FORCE (FAS), COLONEL JUAN RAFAEL ((BUSTILLO)), SAID THAT HE WAS NOT INVOLVED IN COUP PLOTTING TO REMOVE MINISTER OF DEFENSE, GENERAL JOSE GUILLERMO ((GARCIA)), FROM OFFICE. HOWEVER, BUSTILLO SAID THAT HE AND A GREAT MANY OTHER MILITARY OFFICERS OPPOSED GARCIA'S CONDUCT OF THE WAR. (b)(1) (b)(3)

2. BUSTILLO WAS ADAMANT THAT GARCIA MUST LEAVE OFFICE QUICKLY. BUSTILLO SAID THAT THE PRESSURE FOR GARCIA'S REMOVAL WILL CONTINUE TO MOUNT AND INFERRED THAT IT COULD REACH AN INTOLERABLE LEVEL SHOULD GARCIA ATTEMPT TO REMAIN IN OFFICE.

3. [redacted] BUSTILLO DISCOUNTED ANY POLITICAL (b)(1) (b)(3)

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MOTIVATIONS ON THE PART OF OFFICERS WHO OPPOSES GARCIA. THIS MAY BE BECAUSE BUSTILLO HIMSELF IS FOCUSING ONLY ON THE STATE OF AFFAIRS IN THE MILITARY AND DOES NOT SEE THAT OTHERS MAY BE POLITICALLY INFLUENCED.)

4. WHEN ASKED IF HE AND OTHER ARMED FORCES OFFICERS WHO OPPOSE GARCIA WOULD LIMIT THEMSELVES TO LEGAL MEANS TO REMOVE HIM, BUSTILLO DODGED THE QUESTION SAYING THAT THE WAR WAS GOING POORLY AND THAT AN EXPERIENCED SOLDIER MUST TAKE OVER ITS MANAGEMENT QUICKLY. BUSTILLO SAID THAT GENERAL CARLOS EUGENIO ((VIDES)) CASANOVA, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL GUARD, WAS THE LOGICAL PERSON TO SUCCEED GARCIA, ALTHOUGH BUSTILLO WAS CONCERNED BECAUSE VIDES HAS NO COMBAT EXPERIENCE.

5. BUSTILLO DENIED THAT AIR FORCE OFFICERS IN GENERAL

WERE SYMPATHETIC TO THE NATIONALIST REPUBLICAN ALLIANCE (ARENA) AND RECEPTIVE TO STAGING A COUP AGAINST GARCIA FOR POLITICAL REASONS. BUSTILLO SAID THAT FAS PILOTS ARE IN TOUCH WITH THE WAR THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AND THEREFORE THEY HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW THE WAR IS DEVELOPING. BUSTILLO SAID THAT AS A RESULT THESE OFFICERS SEE FIRST HAND THE MISMANAGMENT OF THE WAR AND UNNECESSARY LOSSES IN MEN AND MATERIEL. THIS KNOWLEDGE HAS LED THEM TO COALESCE IN OPPOSITION TO GARCIA. BUSTILLO SAID THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF OPPOSITION TO GARCIA'S LEADERSHIP THROUGHOUT THE ARMED FORCES AND IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO VIEW OPPOSITION AS CONCENTRATED ONLY IN THE AIR FORCE.

6. BUSTILLO SAID THAT HE AND OTHER AIR FORCE OFFICERS OPPOSE GARCIA SOLELY FOR MISMANAGEMENT OF THE WAR. BUSTILLO LISTED A SERIES OF PROBLEMS THAT GARCIA HAS CAUSED, INCLUDING INATTENTION TO THE WAR WHILE PURSUING POLITICS AND FAVORITISM TOWARD INEPT OFFICERS WHO ARE LOYAL TO HIM. BUSTILLO WAS MOST EXERCISED OVER THE CASE OF LTC. SIGIFREDO ((OCHOA)) PEREZ. BUSTILLO UNDERSCORED WHAT HE CALLED THE ILLOGICAL DECISION ON GARCIA'S PART TO REMOVE OCHOA, AN EXPERIENCED SOLDIER, FROM HIS COMBAT ROLE AND SEND HIM OFF TO URUGUAY AS MILITARY ATTACHE DURING THIS CRUCIAL PERIOD.

7. BUSTILLO ACCUSED GARCIA OF SPREADING COUP RUMORS AS AN EFFORT TO STAY IN OFFICE. HE SAID THAT TALK ABOUT AIR FORCE OFFICERS BEING INFLUENCED BY ARENA HAD NOT CIRCULATED UNTIL THESE OFFICERS BEGAN TO CRITICIZE GARCIA. BUSTILLO WAS UPSET AT THE IDEA THAT HE MIGHT BE VIEWED AS A COUP PLOTTER AND REITERATED HIS SOLE INTEREST IN HAVING GARCIA REPLACED AND SUCCESSFULLY PROSECUTING THE WAR. HE DENIED RUMORS ACCUSING HIM OF WANTING TO BE MINISTER OF DEFENSE OR EVEN THE PRESIDENT.

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REPORT CLASS S E C R E T--WARNING NOTICE-[redacted] (b)(1)
(b)(3)
[redacted]-DISSEMINATION AND EXTRACTION

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OF INFORMATION CONTROLLED BY ORIGINATOR.DECL: [redacted] RECORDED REPORTING OFFICER. (b)(1)
ALL PORTIONS CARRY CLASSIFICATION AND CONTROLS OF OVERALL DOCUMENT. (b)(3)
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